

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING, IMPACTS, AND MITIGATION MEASURES

INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

This section describes the environmental setting, potential impacts, and proposed mitigation measures for the Proposed Project. Ten subsections including Geology and Coastal Processes, Air Quality, Transportation, Biological Resources, Hazards, Noise, Aesthetics, Cultural Resources, Recreation and Water Quality follow.

Each issue area section provides background information and describes the environmental setting (baseline conditions) to help the reader understand present conditions without the Proposed Project. In addition, each section describes how an impact is determined to be “significant” or not. The individual sections recommend mitigation measures, as necessary, to reduce significant impacts.

The following formatting conventions apply to the discussions of impacts and mitigation measures. Both impacts and any corresponding mitigation measures are identified by a **letter-number designation**, e.g., Impact **AQ-1** and corresponding Mitigation Measure(s) **AQ-1**.

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Environmental Baseline

The analysis of each issue begins with an examination of the existing physical setting (baseline condition) of relevance to an analysis of the Proposed Project. The effects of proposed actions are defined in terms of changes to the environmental setting that are attributable to these actions.

Significance Criteria

Short-term (generally lasting only throughout the duration of the project) and long-term impacts are analyzed. Each impact statement is assigned a level of significance, based on the significance criteria/thresholds, and the discussion of each impact concludes with the measure(s) to mitigate project effects. The significance criteria serve as a benchmark for determining if a project action will result in a significant environmental impact when evaluated against the baseline. According to the State CEQA Guidelines section 15382, a significant effect on the environment means “...a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project...”

Impact classifications include:

- **Class 1** - Significant unavoidable adverse impacts that cannot be mitigated to a level of insignificant. A Class 1 impact is one for which a solution has not been formulated, either because of the limits of technical and/or scientific knowledge, or unfeasibility from a technical, economic, and/or legal perspective. Under CEQA, a Class 1 impact would require a "Statement of Overriding Considerations" by the lead agency to approve the Proposed Project.
- **Class 2** - Adverse environmental impacts that can be mitigated to a level of insignificant. Measures have been identified that can feasibly be implemented and will avoid the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action; minimize impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation; rectify the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment; or compensate for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.
- **Class 3** - Adverse environmental impacts that are considered insignificant or have no identified impact. These impacts, while adverse, are not of a sufficient magnitude, intensity, or duration to disrupt the environment, and have no serious consequences. As a result, no mitigation is required.
- **Class 4** - Beneficial impacts benefit or improve the environment and no mitigation is required.

Formulation of Mitigation Measures and Mitigation Monitoring Program

When significant impacts are identified, feasible mitigation measures are formulated to eliminate or reduce the intensity of the impacts and focus on the protection of sensitive resources. The effectiveness of a mitigation measure is subsequently determined by evaluating the impact remaining after its application. Those impacts meeting or exceeding the impact significance criteria after mitigation are considered residual impacts that remain significant (Class 1). Implementation of more than one mitigation measure may be needed to reduce an impact below a level of significance. The mitigation measures identified in this EIR section are also presented in a Mitigation Monitoring Program which is provided as Appendix P to this EIR.

If any measures become incorporated as part of a component action's design, they are no longer considered mitigation measures under the CEQA. If they reduce a potentially significant impact to a level below significance, they eliminate the potential for that significant impact, since the "measure" is now a component of the action. Such measures incorporated into the project design have the same status as any "applicant proposed measures." The CSLC's practice is to include all mitigation measures in the MMP.

Cumulative Impacts

Section 5.0 of this EIR, CEQA Considerations, presents the cumulative impact scenario. In this section a list is provided that identifies other related future projects near the project site.

The focus of the cumulative impact analysis is to identify the potential impacts of the Proposed Project that might not be significant when considered alone, but that might contribute to a significant impact when viewed in conjunction with other projects.

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